

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
EASTERN DISTRICT OF MICHIGAN
SOUTHERN DIVISION

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,

Plaintiff,

v.

CURTIS ALANZO BALLARD,

Defendant.

Case No. 2:21-cr-20286

HONORABLE STEPHEN J. MURPHY, III

ORDER GRANTING MOTION TO SEAL [38]

The Government moved, with Defendant's consent, to seal exhibits it had filed in the response brief to the motion to suppress. ECF 38, PgID 155–56. The Government explained that the exhibits were inadvertently not filed under seal despite containing Defendant's personal information and information about witnesses to the alleged crime. *Id.* at 155.

The Sixth Circuit favors a "strong presumption in favor of open[]" court records. *Shane Grp., Inc. v. Blue Cross Blue Shield of Mich.*, 825 F.3d 299, 305 (6th Cir. 2016) (internal quotation omitted). To overcome the strong presumption, a party must show "a compelling reason" that is "narrowly tailored to serve that reason." *Id.* (citation omitted). The Court also has an "independent" "obligation to explain the basis for sealing court records." *Id.* at 306. The Court will grant the unopposed motion to seal because protecting personal information and witnesses to a crime are compelling reasons. *See United States v. Campbell*, No. 1:19-cr-25, 2021 WL 1975319, at *4 (S.D.

Ohio May 18, 2021). That said, the Government must file redacted versions of the sealed exhibits on the docket to meet the narrowly tailored prong.

WHEREFORE, it is hereby **ORDERED** that the motion to seal [38] is **GRANTED**.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Clerk of the Court must **SEAL** ECF 30-1; 30-2; and 30-3.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Government must **FILE** redacted versions of the sealed exhibits on the docket **no later than October 13, 2021**.

SO ORDERED.

s/ Stephen J. Murphy, III
STEPHEN J. MURPHY, III
United States District Judge

Dated: October 4, 2021

I hereby certify that a copy of the foregoing document was served upon the parties and/or counsel of record on October 4, 2021, by electronic and/or ordinary mail.

s/ David P. Parker
Case Manager